Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 for diversion of 28,588.159 ha. of forest land for regularisation of pre 1.1.1977 encroachments in forest land in five districts of Kerala namely; Idukki, Pathanamthitta, Thrissur, Ernakulam and Kollam has been accorded by the Ministry on 31.1.95. The proposal of the State Government of Kerala has been approved subject to certain conditions, which *inter alia*, include ground verification and demarcation of area to be regularised in favour of individual encroachers by the State Government, raising of compensatory afforestation over double the degraded forest land in a phased manner and furnishing of monthly reports to the Ministry giving schedules of the forest land assigned in favour of encroachers.

Hydro-Electric Project in the Nilgiris

413. SHRI SOM PAL: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the report under the headline 'Wringing Power out of the fragile Nilgiris' printed by the 'Indian Express' of 23rd February, 1995, has been seen by Government;

(b) if so, whether it is a fact that the Tamil Nadu Government are going ahead with a hydro-electric project in the Nilgiris, which is likely to cause severe damage to the already dilapidated ecology and environment of the region; and

(c) if so, what action Government propose to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The 6MW Kallarpallam hydroelectric project mentioned in the News item has not, so far, been referred for environmental or forest clearance.

Functioning of Maharashtra Pollution Control Board

414. SHRI SOM PAL: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the report entitled 'Ecology group flays MPCB functioning', published in the 'Economic Times' of 22nd February, 1995 which quotes the Save New Bombay Committee alleging a nexus between industries and officials of the Maharashtra Pollution Control Board in by passing environmental regulations.

(b) whether Government have conducted any enquiry into the matter and ensured that anti-pollution rules are not violated and those indulging in the malpractice are punished;

(c) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(d) if not, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) and (b) The Government is not aware of any such nexus between industries and officials of the Maharashtra State Pollution Control Board.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

Death of a Cheetah in the Delhi Zoo

415. SHRI GAYA SINGH:
SHRI JALALUUDIN ANSARI:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that one of the two surviving cheetahs in the country died in Delhi Zoo recently;

(b) if so, whether Government have made any inquiry into the circumstances leading to the death of the imported cheetah;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the Zoos lack in veterinary expertise and infrastructure to maintain and deal with the imported animals; and

(d) if so, what steps have been taken by Government to remove the deficiency for proper maintenance the wild animals in the Zoos?